



Concordia
UNIVERSITY

Task Force on Child Care Issues

Report to

Concordia Council on Student Life

March 1995

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1. History and Mandate of the Task Force on Child Care Issues

On February 14, 1992 the Concordia Council on Student Life (CCSL) passed a motion to establish the Task Force on Child Care Issues. The Task Force's mandate was as follows:

The Task Force will review and make appropriate recommendations concerning the provision of child care services for parents/guardians at the university. This issue of child care is compatible with and supported by the Student Services Mission Statement, in particular

"We seek to fulfil (this) mandate by valuing the diversity which characterizes the Concordia community. Student Services advocates the creation of an environment at the University which minimizes anxiety, promotes positive attitudes and stimulates an excitement for learning." (Implementation Report, Task Force on the Review of Student Services, May 1991).

The Task Force was to consider:

- whether Concordia University has a responsibility to provide child care services for student/parents;
- the current state of availability of child care services at Concordia;
- the feasibility (legal, safety & financial) of child care services within Concordia.

The Task Force was to review the most current reports reflecting child care needs at Concordia and analyze policy and practice at other Canadian post-secondary institutions in making its determinations about child care at Concordia.

The Task Force was mandated to begin its investigations in April 1992, however the starting date was delayed until the Fall of 1992. The Task Force submitted Interim Reports to the CCSL on December 11, 1992 and May 14, 1993¹, and was to submit its Final Report in the Fall of 1993, however numerous interruptions in the Task Force's efforts made meeting that deadline impossible. The Task Force had great difficulty finding student representatives, likely due to the turbulent period the student government was facing at that time. As well, some members of the Task Force took either sick leave or maternity leave, resulting in interruptions in work that lasted months at a time. In spite of all these difficulties, the Task Force on Child Care Issues is very pleased to submit its Final Report at this time.

¹ See Appendices.

2. Composition of the Task Force

The members of the Task Force on Child Care Issues include:

Angela Ghadban, Recording Secretary
Nina Howe, Associate Professor, Education Department
Ann Kerby, Director, Advocacy & Support Services, *Chair*
Margot Lacroix, Coordinator, Women's Centre (*January 1992 - December 1994*)
Michelle Séguin, Acting Coordinator, Status of Women Office
Alison Stevens, Representative of Concordia Daycare Centres.

There were a number of student representatives appointed to the Task Force, however none were able to assume their mandate.

3. Concordia University's Place in the Child Care Issue

With the ever-increasing number of women participating in the workforce and in academic life, individuals and institutions are being called upon to reflect on their responsibilities with regard to the conditions and settings in which the children born in our society evolve and grow. If carried out to its fullest extent, this reflection should lead to no less than a radical questioning of the traditional separation between the public and private spheres of life, of conventional arrangements where issues such as child care are concerned, and to reconsidering the traditional involvement of various public institutions in this respect. One of the main questions set forward by the Task Force on Child Care Issues falls exactly within this larger framework: does the university have a responsibility to provide child care services for student, staff and faculty parents, and if so, what measures are necessary to assume a proactive and affirming stance in this respect?

The first part of this question has been partially answered if we consider that there already exist two daycare centres affiliated with Concordia University that have been in operation since 1971 (Garderie Concordia) and 1988 (Garderie Les P'tits Profs) respectively. However, a closer look at the situation reveals that despite the excellent performance of both daycares, a variety of crucial needs are not being met, particularly the needs of student parents. Other surveys conducted on campus² confirm that there is indeed also a need for a more flexible system than that provided by the standard model of daycare based on the needs of full-time working parents.

² *Report of the Task Force on Services for Part-time Students*, November 1991, and *Setting a Framework for Future Student Recruitment Efforts at Concordia University*, June 1992.

Presently, accessibility to daycare on campus is impeded by a number of factors which are being presented in this report, and which range from availability of services to financial concerns.

Concordia University's character as a metropolitan University is largely reflected in a student population that tends to be older, made up of partly or fully employed students, a large portion of whom study on a part-time basis, and who are more likely to have children. Within this context, and this is supported by the data gathered by the Task Force on Services for Part-Time Students, it can be argued that there exists a need for services differing from those perceived as being complementary to academic life in the traditional university setting, eg. recreation or counselling, towards which substantial funding is channelled each year. This approach would support the view that child care is not an extraneous preoccupation but is in fact a concern that affects the very quality of the life of our community.

While child care should be considered an issue that concerns both genders alike, it remains a fact that today women still bear a large part of the responsibility for child care both inside and outside the home, and are therefore more likely to suffer from a lack of adequate resources. Other reports examining child care services in various universities across Canada are unanimous in their conclusions: *the availability and accessibility of child care plays a key role in recruitment, retention, attendance, quality of student life, and constitutes concrete affirmative action in the task of redressing systemic inequities*. Increased enrolment of women in graduate studies and of Native students in all programs are two examples of potential positive outcomes of more equitable access to a higher education. Access to education also guarantees later access to enhanced work conditions. The university has an essential role to play in this respect, if only to ensure that its own objectives of equity in the academic sector are eventually met through the academic training and subsequent hiring of faculty members.

Good daycare that is both affordable and convenient is a decisive benefit in ensuring stable, efficient and dedicated staff, and in attracting high quality new faculty and staff. It is also an important element of accessibility to university education, particularly for single parent graduate students and families where both parents are students.

A plan for child care, however, goes beyond the establishment of a more responsive infrastructure of child care services. Profound changes in attitudes are also necessary in order to convince student parents that they have a rightful place in an academic setting, and that they do not have to neglect or sacrifice one part of their life in order to fulfil the requirements of the other part. Policy statements that ensure that alternatives, such as leaves and deferrals, are automatically available in cases of child-

related emergencies would constitute one such way of welcoming parents in our midst, and is one of the recommendations made in this report.

We have a responsibility in convincing all the members of our community that more flexibility and a less rigid separation between our private and our academic and working lives is not synonymous with a decrease in standards, and that we have everything to gain by offering opportunities to bridge the two. By opening larger avenues of support for all the mothers, fathers and potential parents who work, teach and study within the institution, Concordia University will continue to pursue its mandate of providing an environment where diversity is valued, sustained and promoted.

1. **Recommendation: That the Faculties recognize sick children as equivalent to sick parents so that doctor's certificates for sick children would be sufficient grounds to defer examinations or delay completion of assignments.**

Vignette 1

When a member of the Task Force called to arrange a phone interview with Larry DePoe, Director of the Dawson College Daycare Centre, a child could be heard crying in the background. During the interview, Larry mentioned that the young mother of the child who was crying was a Concordia University student looking for daycare for her toddler-aged child. Since the Garderie Concordia daycare did not accept children under the age of two-and-a-half, the mother was seeking space at another downtown centre. Unfortunately, the daycare on the Loyola campus which does take infants and toddlers was not suitable for her needs.

4. Statistical Context

The daily life of parents who study or work often looks like a steeplechase race. It is a race where women mostly, but also more and more men, arrive exhausted at the finish line because of the apparent incompatibility between family and professional responsibilities.

Today, more than three out of five mothers of pre-school children are working outside the home and women compose 54% of the University student population.³ However, the traditional concept of work and study that prevails in most organizations often does not take into account the family obligations of the majority of students and employees. Parents spend a considerable amount of time and energy each day planning work or study activities in conjunction with family duties. It is now time for institutions to adapt their structures to today's new reality.

The absence of adequate and flexible child care resources has important personal and professional consequences for the parent: stress, overwork, worry, insufficient personal free time, absences for family emergencies, and not being able to compete for advancement with others who do not have children. For parent-students, it also translates into anxiety, isolation, financial hardships, failing or dropping courses, and putting an end to an otherwise successful academic career. If our society truly values the concept of family, parents should not have to choose between family and professional responsibilities. Although 60% of couples in Quebec with children are in the workforce and 60% of the heads of the 300,000 single families have a job outside the home, only 64% of the needs in child care for pre-school children in Quebec are met.

The present demographic situation also calls for immediate responses. For example in Sweden, the introduction of concrete measures aimed at addressing child care needs seem to have had an important impact on the birth rate which increased from 1,68 per woman in 1980 to 2,11 in 1991. What is even more interesting is the fact that almost all Swedish women who have children work outside the home; 89.4% of women with children younger than 16 and 86.9% of women with children younger than 7 were employed in 1988.

The above statistics show clearly that the need for adequate and flexible daycare is being felt across Canada, and indeed around the world, and hopefully as different child care systems are put into place, attitudes toward parents and child care responsibilities will change to allow people to feel comfortable with and supported in their multiple roles.

As an educator and an employer, Concordia University, through its commitment to equality in education for students and employment equity for faculty and staff, can play an important role by taking pro-active measures that foster a change in attitudes towards students, faculty and staff who have parental responsibilities. These measures would recognize the fact that parental care is not only the responsibility of

³ A survey conducted by the University of Alberta shows that 28% of UofA graduate students and 8.6% of undergraduate students are parents. Those figures are not known for Concordia.

parents who study or work at Concordia but a university-wide responsibility. Implementing measures that would expand child care possibilities would increase the satisfaction of parent/students, have beneficial effects on productivity, encourage the retention of female students, as well as create a more supportive environment for women.

Several initiatives have been undertaken in the educational system to support parents and answer their needs. The Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la science (MESS)/Universités committee has set up a task force on child care in Québec universities. Laval University has examined the possibilities of creating a system for emergency child care and a drop-in child care centre. Elsewhere in Canada, several universities have examined the child care issue in an attempt to redress the inequities resulting from the traditional structures. In recent years, the University of Alberta (1992), and Queen's University (1989) have published reports in which they conclude that the improvement of child care services is part of the university's responsibility. In devoting resources to the consideration of this issue and in implementing the Task Force's recommendations, Concordia University will be making a significant contribution to this nationwide effort to improve child care.

Vignette 2

One professor reports having students ask if their school-aged children could sit in the class, because it was a school holiday and the mothers had been unable to arrange for child care. Typically, the children read, draw or engage in some quiet activity during the two or three hour class.

5. Student Needs for Child Care

Without an extensive survey it is difficult to determine exactly the extent of students' child care needs. At the moment information regarding child care responsibilities is not gathered from students upon application or registration, however the Task Force recognizes the Faculty of Fine Arts' concerted efforts at collecting such information from its students. University-wide information would be most valuable in determining our community's child care needs. If possible, the University should begin to collect this data and make it available through the Student Information System.

The Task Force did not have the resources to undertake an extensive survey, however it did conduct focus groups, interviews and receive submissions in an effort to ascertain the kind of child care services students require. The Task Force also drew upon data from national surveys, and from studies carried out at other universities and considered how the findings of these studies can be applied to Concordia. What the Task Force heard from students without exception is that they require reasonably priced, quality child care and also flexible, convenient, part-time and drop-in care. We have noted and explored how commercial enterprises have been incorporating supervised play centres that provide short term care for young children. Equally noted were services provided by hotels for guests that allow them to leave their children in the care of professionals as needed. Students expressed a need for a similar service. They envisaged a drop-in centre they could avail themselves of during meetings with professors, exams scheduled outside of class time, or trips to the library.

An interesting suggestion along these lines was to set up a supervised play area adjacent to a meeting room so that groups could meet with their children nearby. Native students supported this idea as it would give them increased opportunities to meet to study or discuss issues of concern to them. The availability of such facilities in the early evening was also recommended.

Vignette 3

A graduate student, who had made an appointment to see her Program Director and arranged for a babysitter, found herself without someone to care for her child when the babysitter cancelled at the last minute. Not wanting to miss the appointment, she brought her 5-year old to the appointment. She apologized for any inconvenience when she arrived and explained that she had no choice but to bring her son with her. The Program Director said it was not a problem; that the child could wait with the program secretary while they met. The student was uncomfortable with the arrangement as she did not know the secretary, however she said nothing for fear of offending either the secretary or the Program Director.

Students who have had to resort to bringing their children to meetings or to class expressed concerns about their children's safety and well-being as the children could be exposed to unsuitable materials or even dangerous situations. Many areas of the University that are perfectly safe for adults might not be so for children, with their curiosity, smaller hands and fingers and abundant energy. It was suggested that a

policy or guidelines regarding children's safety be drafted by the University. As well, before introducing a drop-in centre, the University would need to research liability issues fully that would not be identical to those involved in full-time daycare.

Another safety issue that was raised was the accessibility for parents parking at the Garderie Les P'tits Profs. Presently, to reach the daycare parents must use the laneway between the Campus Centre and Printing Services. At times the laneway is blocked by trucks making deliveries, forcing parents to either wait for the deliveries to be completed or to park their cars in the larger lot in front of Physical Plant and walk with their children through the laneway. The latter alternative is not safe. Discussions between the Garderie Les P'tits Profs and the University to resolve this issue have been unsuccessful, but must be pursued until a satisfactory arrangement has been made.

Students who brought their views to the Task Force also voiced a need for regular part-time care. Students do not generally follow a nine-to-five schedule and consequently do not need nine-to-five daycare. The Garderie Concordia has offered part-time placement options to 2 1/2 to 5 year olds, either two full days or three full days a week. These places were available at the expense of full-time spaces and the daycare cannot always guarantee such arrangements. However, even when the part-time places exist they do not always suit students' needs as many of them require only morning or afternoon child care as opposed to full days.

Given the number of evening classes offered at Concordia, there is also an obvious need for evening care for the children of both faculty and students. This type of care is difficult to find and students often scramble from week to week to ensure that they have appropriate child care.

In consulting with the University community, it quickly became apparent to the Task Force that students have a variety of child care needs; they require a child care network that can accommodate their varied schedules. Flexible child care would benefit students by allowing them to participate more fully in the life of the University and would relieve some of the stress that student parents face. A flexible system of child care would also benefit faculty with evening classes and appointments and staff who would like to get involved in the University outside of office hours.

Students pointed out that there is no space in the University where parents can change their babies and mothers can breast feed in relative privacy. The washrooms on both campuses are not designed for this activity. Providing space intended for this purpose would be a relatively simple undertaking but one that would go a long way to making the University more attractive to parents.

The existing daycare centres as presently designed cannot provide the full range of services that students require. Some expansion is feasible for both daycares and an overlapping of services should be possible -- for example, evening use of existing day-time space, and common administration of two or more services.

The Task Force did not consider the issue of care for sick children. However, this issue needs to be addressed as parents are often hard-pressed to come up with alternate care when their children fall ill. Those who met with the Task Force felt that emergency care, if it involves sick children, would either require administrative service only (referral and resource) or isolated space with trained personnel. Other types of ad hoc care could be handled by a drop-in centre. Drop-in care on a regular or occasional basis is a need which has been expressed over and over again and must be addressed as a priority.

2. **Recommendation:** That statistics regarding student parents at the undergraduate and graduate levels be made available on the SIS system.
3. **Recommendation:** That the appropriate services and departments (Environmental Health & Safety Office, Security, Education -ECE, etc.) draft guidelines regarding children's safety within the University
4. **Recommendation:** That the range of services available to parents at Concordia be extended to include evening, drop-in, emergency and more flexible part-time child care.

The high cost of daycare was another concern expressed by students. While full-time students who apply and are eligible for provincial financial aid usually have their daycare subsidized, the restrictive nature of the loans and bursaries system means that part-time students do not receive the same benefits. This is true even when the difference between a part-time and a full-time student is one extra course. As a result, students who can only study part-time because of their parental responsibilities shoulder the burden of child care alone.

Vignette 4

One professor reported that a single mother turned up to write her final exam with her 4-year-old daughter in tow. Her child care arrangements had fallen through at the last minute and she had no alternative, because there was no drop-in child care on campus. The Examinations Officer would not allow the child to be in the room with the rest of the class and arranged for the student to write the exam in a small room. The child was allowed to stay with her mother. After the first half hour of the exam (during which the professor stayed in the exam room with the other students), the professor took the child to the cafeteria to allow the mother a chance to write the exam in quiet.

6. The Relationship Between the University and the Daycare Centres

The relationship between the University and the two daycare centres is not well defined. This is partly due to both historical and economic factors, as well as the fact that both centres are independent, not-for-profit organizations. The nature of their licenses as independent not-for-profit centres dictates that they be run by a Board of Directors made up primarily of parents. Nevertheless both centres are affiliated with the University and their clientele are mostly Concordia students, staff and faculty. The University is not directly responsible for running either centre, although the Director of Advocacy & Support Services serves as liaison with both daycare centres and holds a seat on the Garderie Concordia's Board of Directors. Both centres also receive substantial monetary and service assistance from the University. However, as outlined below, this assistance varies between the two centres and has been the cause of some difficulty in clarifying the relationship between the University and the two daycare centres.

Garderie les P'tits Profs

The degree of University assistance to the two daycare centres differs for historical reasons. For example, the Garderie Les P'tits Profs which was designed to service staff needs on the Loyola campus (although it currently services students and faculty as well), has been housed on University property since its inception in 1988. In 1991, when the centre moved out of its space on West Broadway because of the construction of the Loyola High School, new accommodations (including bigger indoor and outdoor space) were found on Belmore Ave. The move, which was initially

disruptive, has been beneficial in the long-run, because the centre gained more space and was able to increase its enrolment. Moreover, the new building has a large outdoor area which has been turned into an exciting and stimulating play area for children of all ages. Renovations to the building at the time of the move were paid for by the University, as are current maintenance and heating expenses.

The Garderie les P'tits Profs is housed in a University building, pays nominal rent and enjoys a solid financial situation. It is able to maintain its fees while gradually improving the salaries and benefits of its staff.

Future space considerations for the Garderie les P'tits Profs must address the accessibility of the daycare. At the moment the daycare is wheelchair accessible on the ground floor only.

Garderie Concordia

There is an unintentional inequity in the University's support of the two daycare centres that is beginning to affect their respective abilities to provide high quality service to the University community. The Garderie Concordia has been in rented space in the Masonic Temple on St. Marc St. for many years. This space is not well designed for young children and the current layout does not allow the daycare to expand its enrolment to include infants and toddlers. Moreover, the University does not contribute financially to heating and maintenance costs. Concordia's contribution to the Garderie Concordia is through an annual subsidy of \$50,000 from the Concordia Council on Student Life. The Garderie Concordia's space problems will be partly addressed by the Fall of 1995 when additions to the space as well as improvements in space design will be completed. This will allow the daycare to increase its enrolment to 60 children and will lower the entrance age to 18 months.

While the recent addition of space has relieved some of the Garderie Concordia's problems, its location in the Masonic Temple building is still not ideal. Over the past few years, the rent paid to the Masons has increased substantially while the physical environment has steadily deteriorated. These concurrent developments produce problems in two areas, namely, finances and quality of space. Rising operating costs due mainly to rent increases have been partially offset by efficient management, but must eventually affect the quality of care offered. Salaries and benefits for staff, which have always been at the high end of the scale for daycares in downtown Montreal, are beginning to slide. Current fees are rising out of the affordable range for most students. The new situation has rendered the University's support obsolete to Garderie Concordia; it is time to change the basis for that support.

The building which houses the Garderie Concordia requires renovations, many of which are not possible without support from the Masons and in some cases the historic nature of the building make them illegal. In past years the Garderie Concordia has had to contend with problems of the electrical, plumbing and heating systems but any changes or upgrades required the cooperation and support of the Masons and cost more money than the daycare could afford. Improved status and a renegotiated rental arrangement have improved but not resolved the financial and space arrangements at the downtown daycare centre.

Ideally the Garderie Concordia should be housed in a University building or supported in a move to another building nearby. Expansion of the services offered by the centre should be considered when choosing a new space. The possibility of a mixed-use space should be considered as well, so that some of the other services recommended in this report could be provided in the same place. Accessibility, both in terms of location and ease of access for all, should also be taken into consideration. Any future moves or space renovations must make the daycare wheelchair accessible.

5. **Recommendation:** That space on downtown University property be allocated to house the Garderie Concordia or new space be rented on behalf of the daycare.
6. **Recommendation:** That the daycare centres be made wheelchair accessible.
7. **Recommendation:** That the University's support for the two daycare centres be given on an equivalent basis.

Current waiting lists for the two daycare centres and surveys of Concordia students show that the available full-time daycare spaces are inadequate and that the spaces available for infants and toddlers are in very high demand. This situation will be slightly improved in the Fall of 1995 when the Garderie Concordia increases its enrolment and begins accepting children from the age of 18 months, however most parents will still be using a patchwork of services provided by family, friends and community daycare centres. Some will continue bringing their children to their place of work or study on a regular or occasional basis.

8. **Recommendation:** That the number of daycare spaces available at Concordia be increased, particularly the number of spaces for infants and toddlers (3 months to 2 1/2 years).

7. The Daycares as a Resource for Teacher Training

For many years, the Specialization in Early Childhood Education program (ECE) in Concordia's Education Department has used the Garderie Concordia as a site for an internship. The Specialization program is a teacher training program for kindergarten to grade six (starting in 1995-96) and graduates are certified by the Quebec Ministry of Education. There are five internships in the Specialization program and students obtain classroom experience in daycare, nursery school, kindergarten and primary grade settings. The first internship includes a weekly seminar and laboratory session and in addition, students spend one day per week for an academic term working in a daycare centre. For over twenty years, the Garderie Concordia served as the only site for the students to do their internship. Enrolment varies each term, with a cap of 20 students, however generally the figure has been closer to 14 to 17 students. Each student is assigned to a specific cooperating teacher who is responsible for supervising his or her activity plans and interactions with the children, interns and other staff. A high degree of supervision and a large time commitment are required of the supervising daycare teachers, especially if the teacher has the maximum of five students per term.

In the past, in return for accepting students from the ECE program, the Garderie Concordia received a subsidy of \$10,000 per year from the University. This money came from the Dean of Arts and Sciences and was transferred to the daycare on the recommendation of the Chair of the Education Department. In addition, the ECE program was granted a seat on the parent board responsible for running the daycare. Since University monies are also supplied by Human Resources and the Concordia Council on Student Life, there have been two other University representatives appointed to the Board of Directors. However, these three members share one vote, thus muting their power on the Board. It should be noted that all three University members have acted as resources for the daycare in a variety of areas. For example, the ECE representative has worked with the teachers on developing evaluation forms, organizing workshops and providing advice on curriculum matters.

During the 1989-90 academic year, the Garderie Concordia requested a change in the arrangement with the Education Department concerning the ECE internship, specifically, a reduction in the number of students. As a result, the ECE representative arranged for the Royal Victoria Hospital Daycare Centre to take half the internship students, starting in the 1990-91 academic year. This necessitated a change in the financial arrangements between the Garderie Concordia and the University. Using as a model the arrangement between the Vanier ECE program and the daycare centres it uses for internship placements, the University agreed to pay a set subsidy per term for each student placed in the Garderie Concordia. Furthermore,

a contract was drafted by members of the Garderie Concordia Board and the Education Department to formalize this arrangement.

As noted by Drs. Sandra Weber and Bette Chambers of the ECE program in public hearings before the Task Force, there has been a long history of tension between the Education Department (particularly the ECE program) and the Garderie Concordia. They noted that the tension has arisen for three related reasons: a) whether the Garderie Concordia is an appropriate setting for the internship; b) the inadequate space of the Garderie; and, c) the role of the ECE representative on the Board of Directors. In reference to the first point, it was reported that the Garderie Concordia appears to have an ambivalent attitude towards the interns and students have frequently complained that they do not feel welcome. In addition, the uneven quality of the program and teachers has made it difficult for the ECE program to use the Garderie Concordia as a model of high-quality daycare. In reference to the second point, it was noted that physical space of the Garderie Concordia was not designed for children, and it is thus difficult for the teachers to create a developmentally appropriate learning environment for the children. Consequently, the ECE program has reservations about the quality of the experience of their students. In reference to the third point, tensions have arisen over a number of years concerning the role of the ECE, and other University representatives on the Board of Directors. The ECE representatives have historically been generous with their time and expertise in a variety of matters such as curriculum, staff development, hiring, and parent-child relations. Although membership on the Board only allows the ECE representative a shared vote, the perception has been that at times the ECE program and the University representatives carry too much weight in certain decisions. At the Task Force's public hearings, the ECE representatives and the Garderie Concordia Director, Honor Lynch, and then-President of the Board of Directors, Wendy Thomas, all raised the question of the role of the ECE and other University representatives on the Board. The need for clarification of the role of these representatives on the daycare's Board appears warranted. Moreover, since the change in the internship arrangement in 1990, the ECE program has seriously considered whether it should retain a seat on the Board or establish an arm's length relationship. As Hathaway and Spanier⁴ have pointed out, the arrangement between an independent provider of child care and academic units that use the facility as a site for teacher training should be formalized.

In the 1993-94, students in the ECE internship were placed at a third daycare centre, Garderie Les P'tits Profs on the Loyola campus. In past years, the occasional Concordia student from various programs (Art Education, Graduate Diploma in ECE) has completed an internship at the Garderie Les P'tits Profs. The Garderie Les P'tits

⁴ Betty K. Hathaway and Edward J. Spanier, "Providing Day Care on a Metropolitan Campus - a University/Public Sector Collaboration." *Metropolitan Universities*, Spring 1992.

Profs has accepted a number of ECE students from the Vanier program during recent years, however Susan Evans, the Director of the daycare, has indicated that because of the affiliation with the University, Concordia students would have first priority. At this time the Education Department is not asking for a seat on the Parent Board and does not anticipate doing so in the future. The Garderie Les P'tits Profs receives monies from departments in the University (Human Resources, Vice-Rector, Services) and there is a University representative on the Board.

9. **Recommendation:** That a special committee be struck to examine all facets of the relationship between the University and the two daycare centres, including teacher training, the issue of University representation on the daycares' Boards of Directors, and the question of the relationship between academic units (i.e., the ECE program) and an independent not-for-profit organization.

8. Benefits of Adequate Daycare to the Concordia Community

Benefits of high quality, reasonably priced and flexible daycare have been pointed out throughout this report, but bear repeating here in the context of the University's goals in recruitment and retention, encouraging diversity, acting as a resource to the community and contributing to the well-being and growth of all its members.

A superior daycare service would be a definite asset in recruiting both students and young faculty. Parents undertaking a major commitment such as study or employment have as one of their priorities the well-being of their children. Removing barriers that student parents often face would increase accessibility to post-secondary education and hopefully would have an impact on enrolment. As well, young female faculty, who must be recruited in order to meet the University's stated goals in employment equity, would find child care options appealing.

A flexible daycare also offers young faculty and students the opportunity to become more involved in the political and developmental life of the University. The participation of the newer members of our community would provide the University with the means to renew itself on an ongoing basis.

In terms of retention of students, faculty and staff, daycare has an important role to play. Students who cannot arrange child care or who cannot afford it have difficulty continuing with their education. Students who are able to make arrangements for child care but who experience financial hardship or worry about the quality of that care have added stresses that can affect their academic performance. Students who met with the Task Force explained that not having stable child care arrangements

resulted in considerable stress, lost time and an inability to participate as fully as they would like in university life.

Faculty and staff would benefit from improvements and flexibility in daycare in terms of having more options available to them and the University would benefit from the increase in morale and reduction in absenteeism among employees. By making child care a priority, the University would be demonstrating its commitment to the entire community.

Part of the University's stated mission is to recognize and promote diversity. A flexible daycare system would recognize the variety of needs that result from different family structures and different individual responsibilities. Promotion of diversity should also include consulting with Concordia's many ethnic groups to determine if they have particular child care needs. A University which acknowledges that children are an important part of its extended community creates an inclusive environment that is essential to the community's well-being.

As a metropolitan university, Concordia must continue the extension of its programs into the community. In increasing the availability of childcare, Concordia would be a key player in the community in acknowledging the importance of having our children in our midst.

9. Implementation of Task Force Recommendations

The recommendations of the Task Force on Child Care Issues present challenges in terms of implementation as they affect two independent organizations as well as the University as a whole. In order to facilitate implementation, a Standing Committee should be created: a) to oversee the development of our daycare facilities; b) to ensure that the recommendations of the Task Force are carried out; c) to educate the University community and lobby to further develop daycare facilities at Concordia; and, d) to oversee with Institutional Planning and Research periodic surveys to determine student needs in terms of child care.

- 10. Recommendation: That a Standing Committee be created to monitor and report on child care at Concordia, composed of representatives of the Education Department, the student body, staff, the daycares and the Vice Rector, Services Office.**

The Task Force recognizes that resources at Concordia are becoming increasingly limited. In spite of this, adequate daycare cannot be treated as a luxury and left aside for "better times". In order to accomplish the needed changes to our daycare structure, a Standing Committee could investigate the possibility of finding alternate means to finance an improved system. A number of corporations have begun to include child care services as optional parts of their benefit packages. The University benefits package could be reviewed to determine if such an addition would be appropriate. As well, the University's faculty and staff unions and associations, in cooperation with the University, could consider exploring the advantages of a benefit plan with child care options.

- 11. Recommendation: That the Benefits Committee be mandated to investigate child care options as part of the University benefits package.**
- 12. Recommendation: That the faculty and staff unions and associations work cooperatively with the University to explore the advantages and possible means of implementation of a flexible daycare system as part of an employee benefits plan.**

Until our daycare system is expanded, it would be helpful to parents if appropriate areas of the University (the daycares, Student Services, Human Resources) develop a list of other daycares for referral, and include daycares that are able to accommodate disabled children.

- 13. Recommendation: That a list of daycares including those that are accessible to disabled children be developed and distributed to appropriate University departments.**

Vignette 5

Full-time faculty are not eligible for the provincial daycare subsidy, because their incomes are too high. Nevertheless, the cost of placing two children in full-time daycare is extremely high (approximately \$900 - \$1000/month at the Garderie Les P'tits Profs). For young faculty who are at the low end of the salary scale, this can present a difficult choice between making a financial sacrifice for high-quality care and paying less for care of uncertain quality in other kinds of settings. While the presence of the two daycare centres is an asset in recruiting young, and particularly female, faculty, the cost can be prohibitive.

10. Conclusion

The daycare issue in our country goes beyond providing more daycare spaces; attitudes need to be changed. The Task Force envisions a situation where daycare is considered as essential to supporting a workforce and student population as an adequate system of roads and public transportation. Daycare is not a luxury; it is an essential part of our infrastructure. Communities need to care for and ensure the growth of children no matter what their age.

In order to change attitudes and ensure that child care needs remain present in people's minds, the Task Force believes that there is a need for regular publicity about the daycares we presently have and those that we would like to have in the future. Such publicity would not only inform the University community and the public of existing daycare facilities but would also increase their awareness of the daycare issue and bridge the gap between what are perceived to be public and private spheres of life. Articles in the Thursday Report, increased publicity in Human Resources materials, especially for new staff and faculty, increased attention in student handbooks, notice in Admissions and Liaison materials would be a good start.

- 14. Recommendation:** That increased publicity regarding the daycare be undertaken by all constituencies of the university - students, faculty and staff.

The members of the Task Force believe that the time has come in the University's and the daycares' existence to chart new territory that will begin to meet the University community's child care needs. The challenges facing the University in terms of recruiting and retaining students and faculty and ensuring the staff will be able to

Task Force on Child Care Issues

continue effectively with their increasing duties, dictate that Concordia must assume a central role in conjunction with the daycares in the provision of high quality and flexible child care. The Task Force is gratified to be able to contribute toward this goal.

11. Summary of Recommendations

1. That the Faculties recognize sick children as equivalent to sick parents so that doctor's certificates for sick children would be sufficient grounds to defer examinations or delay completion of assignments.
2. That statistics regarding student parents at the undergraduate and graduate levels be made available on the SIS system.
3. That the appropriate services and departments (Environmental Health & Safety Office, Security, Education -ECE, etc.) draft guidelines regarding children's safety within the University
4. That the range of services available to parents at Concordia be extended to include evening, drop-in, emergency and more flexible part-time child care.
5. That space on downtown University property be allocated to house the Garderie Concordia or new space be rented on behalf of the daycare.
6. That the daycare centres be made wheelchair accessible.
7. That the University's support for the two daycares be given on an equivalent basis.
8. That the number of daycare spaces available at Concordia be increased, particularly the number of spaces for infants and toddlers (3 months to 2 1/2 years).
9. That a special committee be struck to examine all facets of the relationship between the University and the two daycare centres, including teacher training, the issue of University representation on the daycares' Boards of Directors, and the question of the relationship between academic units (i.e., the ECE program) and an independent not-for-profit organization.
10. That a Standing Committee be created to monitor and report on child care at Concordia, composed of representatives of the Education Department, the student body, staff, the daycares and the Vice Rector, Services.
11. That the Benefits Committee be mandated to investigate child care options as part of the University benefits package.

12. That the faculty and staff unions and associations work cooperatively with the University to explore the advantages and possible means of implementation of a flexible daycare system as part of an employee benefits plan.
13. That a list of daycares including those that are accessible to disabled children be developed and distributed to appropriate University departments.
14. That increased publicity regarding the daycare be undertaken by all constituencies of the university - students, faculty and staff.

APPENDIX 1

CONCORDIA COUNCIL ON STUDENT LIFE - FEBRUARY 14, 1992

MANDATE OF THE TASK FORCE ON CHILD CARE ISSUES

The Task Force will review and make appropriate recommendations concerning the provision of child care services for parents/guardians at the university. This issue of child care is compatible with and supported by the Student Services Mission Statement, in particular

"We seek to fulfil (this) mandate by valuing the diversity which characterizes the Concordia community. Student Services advocates the creation of an environment at the University which minimizes anxiety, promotes positive attitudes and stimulates an excitement for learning."

Implementation Report
Task Force on the Review of
Student Services, May 1991

The Committee to consider:

- does Concordia have a responsibility to provide child care services for student/parents?
- the availability of child care services at Concordia;
- the most current reports reflecting child care needs at Concordia;
- policy and practices in other post-secondary Canadian institutions;
- the feasibility (legal, safety & financial) of child care services within Concordia.

Interim report due:	Fall 1992
Final report due:	Spring 1993

APPENDIX 2

INTERIM REPORT TO CCSL

December 11, 1992

TASK FORCE ON CHILD CARE ISSUES

COMPOSITION

The Task Force on Child Care Issues is composed of:

Margot Lacroix, Coordinator, Women's Centre
Alison Stevens, Representative of Concordia Daycare Centres
Michelle Séguin, Representative of Status of Women Office
Nina Howe, Associate Professor, Education Department
Kristen Gilbert, Undergraduate Student
Janet Mrenica resigned on September 3, 1992 and was replaced by Heather Gardinor on November 9, 1992.
Ann Kerby, Director, Advocacy & Support Services, Chair
Angela Ghadban, Recording Secretary

At present, there are places for two student representatives to join the committee.

MEETINGS

The task force has met formally for a total of six hours to date. Individual research by members on their specialization, eg. Status of Women, Early Child Care Education, etc. has been ongoing. Support staff preparation was considerable over the summer as well as approximately two hours of preparation for each meeting.

REVIEW

The task force concentrated, over the summer and in the fall, on clarifying the mandate and objectives, researching other university and national programmes, designing a needs assessment, and setting a schedule for public hearings.

ACTION OF COMMITTEE

- Reviewed the current child care options at Concordia and prepared an overview chart of options.
- Clarified the definition of child care to include more than standard "daycare" and address the particular needs of the Concordia full and part-time community.
- Established a strategy to assess the need for child care at Concordia.
 - *Added questions on family status to the Orientation survey.*
 - *Requested the Student Information System to include questions on family status in the demographic information data bank.*
 - *Concordia materials consulted: Status of Women Action Plan 1993-2000; Task Force on Services for Part-time Students (Survey); Permanent Review Committee on the Status of Women, Fine Arts.*
 - *Gathered statistical information from the Concordia day care centres.*
 - *Requested information from the Single Mum's Group (Women's Centre).*
 - *Received a presentation from the Fine Arts Children's Coop (Maria Torres, Fine Arts Graduate Student).*
- Reviewed what exists in other Canadian Universities.
 - *Canadian National Child Care Study from Statistics Canada.*
 - *University of Alberta have recently completed an across Canada survey - consulted with organizers.*
 - *Consulted with York University.*
- Prepared advertisements to be placed (Winter 1993) in the university newspapers requesting written and oral presentations.
- Prepared an invitation and mailing list directed to specific target groups (Winter 1993) offering the option of presenting to the committee, a formal written presentation or an oral presentation.
- Prepared guidelines for these presentations.
- Decided on a distribution/communications strategy to include consultation with a wide spectrum of university groups, students, faculty and staff.

Task Force on Child Care Issues

- Designed a questionnaire/survey to be distributed to the community.
- May 1993 - submission of report to CCSL.

Respectfully Submitted, Ann Kerby, Director, Advocacy & Support Services

APPENDIX 3

INTERIM REPORT TO CCSL (#2)

May 14, 1993

TASK FORCE ON CHILD CARE ISSUES

COMPOSITION

The Task Force on Child Care Issues has been meeting regularly throughout the second term without the presence of student representatives. Notices of meetings and accompanying documentation have been forwarded regularly to the appropriate association offices.

MEETINGS

Since January 1993 the Task Force has held four meetings for a total of seven hours. One Public Hearing was held on April 6, 1993 in the Department of Early Childhood Education. Interviews have been held with the following department representatives:

- Associate Vice-Rector (Student Life)
- Student Advisor, Concordia Council on First Nations Education
- Student representative, Concordia Council on First Nations Education
- Director, Garderie Les P'tits Profs
- President of the Board of Directors, Garderie Les P'tits Profs
- Director, Garderie Concordia
- President of the Board of Directors, Garderie Concordia
- Faculty representatives, Department of Early Childhood Education

REVIEW

The following tasks were undertaken by the Task Force during the second term:

- Faculty, staff and student associations as well as administrative offices were surveyed by letter and follow-up telephone interview asking their opinion on child care needs and the university's responsibility to provide such services.
- Advertisements announcing a Public Hearing were placed in the Link and the Thursday Report.
- Flyers advertising the Public Hearing and requesting written briefs were circulated throughout the internal mail system of the university.

- The Task Force reviewed numerous reports at the national and provincial level concerning the issue of child care. In particular, the Task Force looked for relationships and impact of child care services on the quality and accessibility of post-secondary education.
- The Task Force investigated the regulations of the Office des services de garde à l'enfance and any barriers or regulations imposed by this office on child care services offered at a university.
- The Task Force investigated the possibility of alternative child care services, eg. drop-in centre, babysitting, etc.
- The Task Force did a comparison of both day care centres currently operating at the University.
- The Task Force scheduled a focus group of parents of young children to discuss their needs and expectations regarding child care services.
- The Task Force consulted with standing committees and other task forces currently reviewing issues of equity and quality of life within the university.

CONCLUSION

The Task Force delayed meeting in the second term until the month of March. This delay was caused by a number of factors including the maternity leave of one Task Force member, the illness of another and the efforts made to have students appointed.

The Task Force respectfully requests an extension of our deadline for recommendations until the Fall 1993 meeting of CCSL.

Respectfully Submitted, Ann Kerby, Director, Advocacy & Support Services.

APPENDIX 4

FORMAL INTERVIEWS & CONSULTATIONS

The following people and organizations/departments were consulted.

Private Hearings:

Donald L. Boisvert, Associate Vice-Rector, Services (Student Life)

Laverne Gervais, Native Student Advisor, Concordia Council on First Nations Education

Helen Watso, student representative, Concordia Council on First Nations Education

Susan Evans, Director, Garderie Les P'tits Profs

Maryann Farkas, President of the Board of Directors, Garderie Les P'tits Profs

Honor Lynch, Director, Garderie Concordia

Wendy Thomas, President of the Board of Directors (1993), Garderie Concordia

Bette Chambers, Director, Department of Early Childhood Education

Maria Torres, graduate student representative, Permanent Review Committee, Status of Women, Fine Arts

Sandra Weber, Spokesperson, Department of Early Childhood Education

Consultations:

Sue Magor, Director, Environmental Health & Safety Office

Lawrence DePoe, Director, Dawson College Day Care Centre

Marilyn Taylor, Chair, Committee on Gender Equity in Matters Academic
McGill Day Care Centre

Office des services de garde à l'enfance

Minister de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Science (MESS)

Concordia University Faculty Association (CUFA)

Concordia University Support Staff Union (CUSSU)

Student Services staff

Single Mum's Group, Concordia Women's Centre

IKEA Children's Ball Room

APPENDIX 5

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

Written submissions to the Task Force were received from:

Sylvie Vergne, President Board of Directors (1994), Garderie Concordia, January 17, 1994

Lawrence DePoe, Director, Garderie Dawson, July 20, 1993

Brigeeen Baddour, Staff, Centre for Mature Students, April 1993

Laverne Gervais, Native Student Advisor, Concordia Council on First Nations Education, April 1993

Susan Evans, Director, Garderie Les P'tits Profs, April 6, 1993

Maryann Farkas, President, Board of Directors, Garderie Les P'tits Profs, April 6, 1993

Honor Lynch, Director, Garderie Concordia & Wendy Thomas, President, Board of Directors (1993), Garderie Concordia, April 6, 1993

APPENDIX 6

OPEN HEARING

April 6, 1993
Room LB-553-2 (Education Department)
1pm to 3pm

Panel: Nina Howe, Ann Kerby, Margot Lacroix, Michelle Séguin and Alison Stevens.

Publicity: Ad in The Link, March 30, 1993
Ad in The Thursday Report, April 1, 1993
Flyers sent to internal departments and student associations
Posters and flyers put up around campus

APPENDIX 7

MEDIA ARTICLES

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| April 2, 1993 | The Link
<u>Task force examines child care options,</u> (article) |
| April 8, 1993 | The Concordian
<u>Sweat & Tears; A single mother's struggle with being a student,</u>
(article) |

APPENDIX 8 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 27, 1992	09:30 - 11:30	Hall 773
October 6, 1992	09:30 - 11:30	AD 131
October 28, 1992	15:00 - 17:00	AD 130-4
March 17, 1993	15:00 - 16:45	AD 130-4
April 15, 1993	10:00 - 12:00	AD 130-4
April 29, 1993	10:00 - 12:00	AD 130-4
May 11, 1993	15:00 - 16:00	AD 131
June 22, 1993	15:30 - 17:00	Annex M
December 3, 1993	09:30 - 12:15	AD 121-3

APPENDIX 9

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY - DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Concordia University Mission Statement

Student Services Mission Statement

Report of the Gender Equity in Matters Academic Committee

Proposed Policy Statement on Educational Equity at Concordia

"Setting a Framework for Future Student Recruitment Efforts at Concordia University", June 1992

Employment Equity Report

Report of the Task Force on Services for Part-time Students, November 1991

Report from the Task Force on Graduate Students

Status of Women Action Plan, Consultation Action Plan, March 1992

Garderie Concordia: Salary Policy - Guidelines

The Thursday Report:

"Having children for the right reasons", February 10, 1994

"More than just babysitters", May 6, 1993

"Professors examine barriers for women in academia", April 29, 1993

"National Daycare Week", May 6, 1993

"Professors examine barriers for women in academic", April 29, 1993

The Concordian:

"Sweat & Tears; A single mother's struggle with being a student", April 8, 1993

Fine Arts Newsletter:

"More than Diapers Need Changing: Childcare at Concordia", December 1991

APPENDIX 10

EXTERNAL DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Reports:

Child Care at Queen's: Principal's Advisory Review Committee on the Status of Women; Sub-Committee on Child Care, Queen's University, May 1989

Université du Québec à Montréal: l'inconciliable; Etude exploratoire sur la conciliation des responsabilités familiales et professionnelles dans trois milieux de travail, 1993.

University of Alberta. Council on Student Life Report on Student Child Care

University of Alberta. Student Child Care: Standing Committee on Student services Reports and Reviews, Report #9, October 1992

Canadian National Child Care Study from Statistics Canada

Report from the "Sous-comité - Université et milieu de vie" of the Comité de concentration MESS/Universités en condition féminine

Michigan Employers' Guide to Child Care, A report issued by the House Republican Task Force on Child Care

A Brief to the Legislative Committee on Bill C-144: A National Childcare Act: A Question of Accessibility for Student In Canada, submitted by the Canadian Federation of Students, September 8, 1998

Articles:

"Campus Child Care: A Challenge for the 80's by the Project on the Status and Education of Women", May 1980.

"Providing Day Care for a Metropolitan Campus: A University/Public Sector Collaboration", (Betty K. Hathaway and Edward Spanier)

Conseil du statut de la femme. La Gazette des femmes. Dossier: Concilier Travail et Famille: Une Mission Possible?, Novembre-décembre 1993

American Journal of Public Health: "Air Quality during the Winter in Québec Day-Care Centers", March 1992 (article)

Le Devoir, Montreal:

"La fin du cégep-providence", April 26, 1993

"Québécoises en chiffres", March 7, 1992

The Gazette, Montreal:

"Our Growing Child-Care Crisis", March 13, 1993

"Working family always worried about child care", August 17, 1992

"Checking in, with the kids", October 31, 1994

"Daycare workers feel undervalued", April 10, 1994

"Boston firm offers staff award-winning child-care centre", April 10, 1994

"Help for all the Jessicas; Let Quebec provide special centre for kids with HIV", February 22, 1994 (editorial)

"Daycare workers pray to premier for decent wages", April 22, 1994

"Daycare is a part of infrastructure, too, guys", February 22, 1994

"Mother accused of abuse after daycare thought children's birthmarks were bruises", March 1994

"On their own and doing fine", November 23, 1992

"Tug-of-war between family, work further strained by poor economy", August 16, 1993

"Daycare workers plan strikes for more pay", May 1993

"Children in peril; Unlicensed daycare facilities are dangerous - and that's where most kids are, report says", March 1993

"Our growing child-care crisis", March 13, 1993

"Step-by-step guide to daycare in Canada", January 9, 1993

"What about our children?", September 28, 1992

"Big concern - Working family always worried about child care", August 17, 1992

Other:

Office des services de garde à l'enfance: ACT; assorted brochures

CAUT Bulletin - Status of Women Supplement, 1993

Human Resources Development Canada: "Children and Families - Background Facts", July 1994 (fact sheet)